**IT Applications, Unit 4**

**Security and ethical considerations, Ch 8, p 308**

Ethics and Information Systems

1. Explain what is meant by the term ethics.  
   Are the principles of right and wrong that are accepted by an individual or social group. Ethical behaviour often guides policy makers within organisations.
2. What is the ethical dilemma in relation to video games?  
   A dilemma occurs when there is a choice between two equally desirable options.  
   Some people have said that video0game writers should not include animated violence in their games because it has a negative impact on children.

Key areas relating to ethics and information systems are:

1. Workplace responsibilities
   1. Outline the responsibilities of employees and employers.  
      within any organisation, employees and employers have certain responsibilities towards one another, as well as to the customer or client. In particular, the employer must pay staff for the work they carry out and provide a suitable work environment in which that work can take place in.
2. Codes of conduct and computer-use policies
   1. What is meant by a code of conduct?  
      a code of conduct (a set of conventional principles and expectations considered binding on any member of a particular group) might say that they are responsible to both, so what happens when there is a conflict? Eg. a programmer might know that there is a bug in a piece of software that they are working on.
   2. What information do computer-use policies generally contain?  
      a company computer-use policy ought to exist. This document would explain clearly to staff what management believes should and should not be done on the computers or peripheral equipment. Employees will then be in no doubt as to what is permitted and when.
3. Employee monitoring
   1. Why are these systems sometimes regarded as unethical?  
      Although these systems are not illegal, depending on the extent of their intrusiveness, they may be considered unethical because they invade the employee’s privacy.
   2. Where does the most common monitoring occur?  
      The most common monitoring occurs on email, PC use and web browsing.
   3. List the advantages and disadvantages of employee monitoring.  
      Advantages – it ensures that employees are doing company work; it ensures that employees maintain target performance levels and it saves time and money.  
      Disadvantages – it is intrusive and may impact on employee privacy and mistrust may develop between employee and employer.
   4. How is web browsing monitored?  
      Through the use of ‘Cookies”.
   5. What is a cookie?  
      Are small files that a web server stores on a user’s computer. Cookies typically contain data about the user, such as the user’s email address and web-viewing preferences. The cookie is sent to the computer when a website is browsed, then stored on the computer’s hard disk. The next time the website is visited; the browser retrieves the cookie from the hard disk and sends data in the cookie to the website.
4. Ethics and the internet
   1. Explain what is meant by the term, netiquette.  
      Short for Network etiquette, it refers to the conventions of politeness observed in Internet communications, such as newsgroups of mailing lists.
   2. List some netiquette guidelines  
      Not posting to inappropriate groups, refraining from commercial advertising, personal messages to one or two individuals should not be posted to newsgroups, when responding to an earlier posting, the minimum necessary context should be quoted, lines should be less than 70 characters lon and before asking a question a user should read the existing messages in the group’s frequently asked questions (FAQs).

**Resolving legal, ethical and social tensions,** p 514

1 List the six steps for handling ethical dilemmas.  
Identify the problem,  
Identify the stakeholders,  
Identify possible alternatives,  
Identify ethical standards,  
Evaluate options and,  
Make a decision.